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(ii) those other parts of Malekula and of the more distant islands such as Santo, Malo, Oba, Raga and Ambrim, which the Small Islanders visit in the course of their canoe trade in pigs and other objects, but with whom they have no marriage connexions.

(*a*) DISPUTES BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE SAME CLAN

Thus, if a dispute arises between a man and his own lodge-brother belonging to the other "Side of the Lodge," every effort would be made to find a peaceful settlement, and if it came to blows, clubs only would be used.[1] The same may be said of quarrels between the members of two Quarters or two Sides of the Stone, with the exception that more persons would be involved, and spears also might on occasion be used.

(*b*) DISPUTES BETWEEN VILLAGES OR SIDES OF THE SAME ISLAND. FORMAL COMBAT ON SPECIAL FIGHTING-GROUNDS

The skirmishes described above were all in the nature of guerilla warfare on a very small scale. They were not noble conflicts at all, any trick being permissible, and clubbing or spearing from the back, or even when the enemy was quite unaware of being attacked, being more usual than face-to-face combat.

Quite different from these were conflicts between the two Sides of the same Island, or to a less extent between individual villages composing the two Sides. In both such cases the conflict took on a much more formal aspect, being fought out with clubs or spears at pre-arranged times on special fighting-grounds. Each pair of adjacent villages had a recognised fighting-ground at some spot where their respective territories joined. If there was an already clear space between them, such as a beach, this would be used. One such was the central portion of the beach Kowu, each end of which belongs respectively to the two villages of Pete-hul and Togh-vanu, and where formal combats between the inhabitants of the two villages took place. If no natural open space existed, a widening

[1] Godefroy (1, 1934, p. 53) relates how, in case of unwitting murder, "a pig is substituted for the murderer. According to ancient custom, the murderer was seized by the arm, then dragged to the dancing-ground, and there struck lightly with a wooden pig-killer as if he were a sacrificial pig. Having thus been 'sacrificed,' he takes a title of shame; he becomes '*Malolo*,' and is thenceforth forbidden from taking part in any social or religious act. Till death he will remain '*Malolo*,' the sacrificed one."

There are, however, cases, particularly when a serious dispute occurs within the framework of the biological family unit, when other solutions are found. Thus my informant Ma-taru's elder brother Are (see Table X) had a quarrel with his father Ter-ter-mal, and, "in order to spite him," committed suicide by breaking off a part of the shaft of a human-bone-tipped poison-arrow, so as to make it short enough, and shooting himself with it in the calf of the leg.

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in the path between the two villages would be the usual place for the opposing forces to meet and fight it out.

By far the most important combats, however, were those taking place between the two Sides of the Island. For these not only had a special fighting-ground at the junction of their respective territories on the beach called Le-siwar, but this beach was also furnished with a stone fort, where it was the custom of the defenders to await attack. This fort, called *titimbe*, consisted of a single surrounding stone wall, but is unfortunately no longer extant, the Roman Catholic Mission having been established, ironically enough, on the site.

Special fighting-grounds of this type are reported by Deacon from South-West Bay (between the districts of Mewun and Seniang),[1] and from other parts of Melanesia.[2] The only stone forts I know of, however, are those reported by Codrington from Ysabel in the Solomon Islands, built on a rocky knoll in the midst of the village for protection against head-hunters.[3] So far as I know, therefore, the Vao fort is the only one recorded in Melanesia as being specially built for formal combat.

Brief Summary of a Formal Combat on Atchin

Apart from a brief reference given on p. 606, I have unfortunately no full accounts of such formal fighting on Vao, no battles of this nature having taken place for some time owing to the Government ban on warfare, which, while still being carried on safely on the mainland, can no longer be prosecuted on a Small Island with a resident missionary. I did, however, witness one such pitched battle in modified form on Atchin, which will be described in detail in a future volume, but of which I will here give a few salient points to illustrate the type of action.

The immediate cause of the trouble occurred during an all-night dance connected with initiation, when the torch carried by one of the hosts was knocked by a third party, also a host, in such a way that the sparks fell in a shower on to the head of the torch-bearer's wife's brother, an important guest from the other Side of the Island. The guest raised his arm to brush off the sparks, but, as this action caused the club he was carrying to be raised also, the torch-bearer thought he was about to strike, and, to save himself, thrust his torch into the guest's face, narrowly missing his eyes. Uproar ensued, clubs were raised, spears brandished and stones thrown. Meanwhile the alarm signal was sounded on the gongs, and at the sight of reinforcements for the hosts the guests made their escape into the neighbouring bush. From here they continued to hurl imprecations at the hosts, some of whom heartily replied, while others, old men, did their utmost to restrain the blood lust of both sides. Finally,

[1] Deacon, 4, p. 223.
[2] Wedgwood, 1, pp. 9 and 16 ff.
[3] Codrington, 3, p. 302.

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the guests retired to their homes, having arranged that there should be a pitched battle the next day. During the interval messengers went to and fro trying to persuade the injured parties to come to terms by means of compensation by payment of pigs. These negotiations were showing some signs of bearing fruit when word came that one of the combatants on the guests' side had been severely injured by a stone. This put a stop to any thought of further negotiation. Blood had been spilled, and must be avenged. Next day the pitched battle occurred. As the occasion was one of avenging insult rather than murder, and neither side really wanted to weaken the other, but only to assert its prestige, it was agreed that though spears were permissible in such a conflict these should not this time be used, but only clubs and stones. The clubs so used were not the carved ceremonial clubs used largely for show and always taken to dances, but simple staves about six feet long. The home-party awaited the attack, partly sheltered behind a stone-and-reed wall forming part of a house-enclosure. The attackers, having first skirmished for hours in the bush, finally came to the edge of the clearing. For more than an hour representatives of either side alternately stepped out slightly in advance of their respective parties to harangue the enemy, moving their bodies violently to and fro as they hurled insults at one another, combined with a recitation of present grievances and a repetition of the intricate minutiae of generation-long ancestral disputes. Meanwhile, the opposing sides would send off an occasional volley of stones—small coral blocks, anything from three to four inches broad, stacked on each side ready for the occasion. At times the harangues were so enthralling that the parties would cease even these hostile acts and would advance to listen spell-bound, till some new taunt would set them shouting counter-accusations, and the stone-throwing would be resumed.[1]

At last these Homeric dialogues ceased, and both sides prepared for personal combat. Members of the home-village, now armed with long fighting-staves, awaited the attack, those in front ranging themselves in an orderly line supported by willing seconders behind. Then the attackers, similarly armed and with their front line equal in strength to that of the defenders, advanced, not with a rush, but slowly, prancing backwards and forwards on springy legs, each time approaching a little nearer, and ceaselessly hurling fresh imprecations. The defenders stood their ground, each raising one foot quickly after the other in tense expectation.

I will not waste space here in giving details of the ensuing battle, involving personalities not relevant to the present volume. It is enough to say that the attackers were repulsed. Luckily no one was killed, so that for the moment pent-up feelings had received their required temporary outlet without giving rise to a new blood-feud that would have

[1] For examples of similar speeches or "scolding matches" before battle from New Ireland and Tanna, see Wedgwood, 1, pp. 15-16.

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726 had the effect, among other things, of seriously interfering with the initiation rites on which the home-village was engaged and which had, through the incident of the torch, given rise to the dispute. Next day a truce was called, and the initiation rites proceeded on their prescribed course. The very enemies who had but yesterday been intent on wreaking vengeance on the home-village came, armed it is true, to perform their allotted parts in the rites, joining in further all-night dances and going about their business as if nothing had happened. Nevertheless the age-long opposition between the two Sides of the Island, of which this affray had been but an incident, continued, and will continue till such time as the whole Small Island civilisation crumbles or is replaced by some new form of co-operative competition with a new orientation more fitting to the changed conditions now being forced on this once self-sufficient people.

(*c*) (i) DISPUTES WITH OTHER SMALL ISLANDS OR VILLAGES ON THE ADJACENT MALEKULAN MAINLAND. AMBUSH AND SURPRISE

Two facts sharply distinguish warfare waged against the inhabitants of other Small Islands and of the adjacent Malekulan mainland from that waged on the Small Island itself.

In the first place, no special fighting-grounds are recognised, nor are there any rules such as characterise fighting between the two Sides of the Island. On the contrary, the methods used are those of ambush and surprise.

In the second place, there are no restrictions whatever on what type of weapon may be used. Thus, while spears (*na-hare*) may be used on the Small Islands, I have no record of the use there of those specially dangerous spears tipped with human bone and for this reason called *hare ta-mat*, a touch from which is said to cause tetanus and an agonising death. These are, however, the chief weapons when fighting on the mainland, either with mainland villages or with the inhabitants of other Small Islands (wars between communities on different islands being fought always on the mainland, since attack by sea is out of the question). So also bows and arrows, whether poisoned or not, are never, so far as I know, used on the Small Islands, but only when fighting on the mainland. In the same way, man-traps and poisonous spined shells laid in the path are used only against a foreign foe. Enemy homes are burnt also whenever possible.

LEX TALIONIS: EQUALISING THE NUMBER OF DEAD ON BOTH SIDES

721 Despite differences in technique, and in what is regarded as honourable in the conduct of warlike disputes in the three categories so far enumerated, one principle is common to all. This is the *lex talionis*, according to which no war, once started and once one death has occurred, can cease till the

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with all the ritual due to an enemy captured in battle,[1] and then eat him. Sometimes, however, he may be killed first, as shown by the following account dealing with the close of one of the early wars between the villages of Pete-hul and Togh-vanu following Na-va-gharu-kalat's challenge at the foundation of Pete-hul.

Human victim sent as peace-offering from Pete-hul to Togh-vanu.

This war was caused in the first place by a couple of Pete-hul men attempting to seduce the wife of a Togh-vanu man named Miren-mal while she was grating coconuts in her garden on the mainland. When he challenged them, they shot him, and this was the occasion of a long-drawn-out war between the two villages. Many were killed on both sides till they were weary of fighting. At last the Pete-hul men made up their minds to send a peace-offering in order to end the war. So they decided on a youth named Ewur, and, enticing him to climb a *ni-ra* tree for the fruit, they shot at him. But they missed, and the doomed youth sprang from the tree and made off into the bush. He had, of course, no chance, and was eventually shot down and sent as a peace-offering to Togh-vanu, where his dead body was duly "sacrificed" according to custom. The manner of such "sacrifice" will be described later in the section on cannibalism.[2] The process may not seem very pretty from our point of view, but it at least prevents further bloodshed and kills off the weakest instead of the strongest.[3]

Small number of dead in old-time warfare.

With regard to the number of men killed in battle, it must not be forgotten that all this fighting goes on, as a rule, in thick bush or on the

[1] See p. 414.

[2] See pp. 622-4.

[3] Speiser (3, p. 238, quoting from *Quarterly Jottings from the New Hebrides*, 1909) records a peacemaking scene after a war lasting several years between the Small Islands of Wala and Rano. The Wala men were still a death ahead of the Rano people, who would only consent to peace on the condition of having a Wala man handed over to them to be killed and eaten. When the missionaries (with the authority of a man-o'-war behind them) intervened, their next proposal was that, as they might not have him dead, they would accept a Wala lad "not to kill, but to become a Rano man." The Wala men, however, refused this, and, after much bargaining, agreed instead to hand over a circle-tusker and ten smaller pigs of specified grades. The Rano men grudgingly accepted this, and came over to Wala, but would not land till one extra fat pig was added to the number. Then a Wala man made a speech "lauding the Rano men and saying how much they were esteemed by Wala. He also spoke at length of the splendid present of exceedingly valuable pigs that they were going to hand over to their friends of Rano, and so on. A Rano man replied rather shortly. Privately they had grumbled about the pigs. They were not up to the promises made; but they agreed to take them. . . . Next morning canoes went over from island to island—the first time for some years—and gradually the old friendly relations were resumed."

Somerville (quoted by Wedgwood, 1) records from the Small Island of Uripiv a case of the opposite nature, in which the vanquished sent a small boy as peace-offering to the victors. I know of no other such case, however, in the Small Islands, and am inclined to think this is a mistake.

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narrowest of paths leading through it. There is thus very little clear space either for spear-throwing or for shooting with bows and arrows. The natives are, moreover, notoriously bad shots. It thus happens often that months of spasmodic fighting go on without causing a single death, and the numbers killed in any one war seldom exceed two or three on either side. That was in the old days, for since the white man introduced muskets the case has become very different, as is shown below.[1]

(*c*) (ii) DISPUTES WITH COMMUNITIES OUTSIDE THE SMALL ISLANDS AND THE ADJACENT MALEKULAN MAINLAND

Lex talionis not applicable in attacks by "strangers."

The above description of *lex talionis* applies only to warfare waged within the cultural area formed by the Small Islands and the adjacent Malekulan mainland, whose inhabitants intermarry and form a cultural unit. Communities living outside this intermarrying area, whom the inhabitants of the Small Islands visit during the course of canoe voyages undertaken chiefly for the sake of trading in pigs, are regarded as foreigners to be treated with the utmost circumspection lest these strangers should perchance, for reasons best known to themselves, fall on them and attack them.[2] In case of such attack, there is no defence other than to fight a rearguard action and if possible to escape. No question of *lex talionis* arises, since the Small Islanders are too far from their home-lands to make any effective reply. Such battles, of which examples will be given in a later volume, were the only things in any way resembling fights of extermination known in the Small Islands before the white man's arrival.

Lodges enjoying diplomatic immunity in Oba and North Raga.

Nevertheless, relations were not entirely unregulated even there, for it must not be forgotten that the chief islands so visited were Oba (and formerly Maewo) and North Raga, which are regarded as the home of Ta-ghar, and on which special rites are performed in connexion with Initiation into Sex.[3] For this purpose a certain diplomatic immunity is provided through the existence of special Lodges built at certain spots on the shore for the sole use of visitors, in which they are supposed theoretically to be safe from attack. It must be remembered, also, that the inhabitants welcome the visitors for the sake of the pigs which they bring in exchange for other pigs and for the purpose of buying the red mats

[1] See p. 602.

[2] Compare Na-va-gharu-kalat's speech on Vao to the effect that any stranger coming ashore must be killed and brought to him to cut up (see pp. 90 and 167).

[3] See Chapter XX.

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made on these islands, especially on Oba, and so highly prized by the Small Islanders. For this reason, the visits more often than not pass off without untoward incident. But there is always the possibility that, lacking any kinship ties, the inhabitants, owing to some dispute over pigs, or some chance slight on their dignity, may turn hostile. So the Small Islanders always go fully armed, and place sentries round about the Lodge to warn them of possible danger.

Ambrim, East Malekula, Malo, Santo.

The same is true, to a slightly lesser extent, of expeditions to Ambrim, where they go also to trade in pigs, and to that part of the east coast of Malekula which is outside the Small Island cultural area as far south as Port Sandwich, which at the present day is the most southerly point to which voyages are made. It was from Unua, on this coast, that the natives of Vao obtained, by payment of pigs, the human victim sacrificed on the erection of a former *ghamal* at Pete-hul.[1] To the north, Malo and Santo are visited for the sake of obtaining the turmeric leaves used in the dying of the red mats manufactured in the Small Islands.[2] So far as I know, no initiation rite is practised by the Small Islanders on these islands, nor are there any special Lodges affording diplomatic immunity, and the Small Islanders have to rely on friendship and the self-interest of the inhabitants not to attack them.

INTRODUCTION OF FIREARMS BY EUROPEANS

CAUSING WHOLESALE MASSACRES AND THE VIRTUAL EXTINCTION OF THE ONCE FLOURISHING POPULATION OF THE ADJACENT MALEKULAN MAINLAND

The last chapter in the chequered war history of these islands has reversed all precedents. This has been due to the introduction of muskets into the islands by white men. From the first arrival of the sandalwood traders about a century ago down to the present time the natives all over the group have been provided with shot-guns and rifles—all commonly referred to as muskets—which have been sold to them, partly in exchange for land or in return for coconuts or for direct payment in coin, and partly, in the early days apparently, out of a deliberate attempt to promote war for the sake of creating a demand for cartridges sold at exorbitant prices. The Condominium agreement of 1906 included a clause forbidding such sales, but the sales still go on. The result is that, for decades past, almost every adult male in the group, at any rate in the Small Islands and Malekula, has possessed a gun, and still does. Now that there is a

[1] See p. 451. [2] See p. 456.

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certain amount of control along the coastal regions, these weapons, while part of the normal equipment of the natives, as formerly were clubs and spears, do comparatively little damage. When they first appeared, however, it was but natural that the natives inhabiting the coastal districts, who had the first opportunity of acquiring them, were unable to resist the power thus put into their hands and used these new weapons not only against one another, but also against their traditional enemies further inland. These, lacking the means to defend themselves against this unknown and deadly form of attack, were in this way slaughtered in such numbers that it was impossible any more to equalise the number of dead. Whereas in the old days the number of dead in any given war was rarely more than two or three on either side, and, if the victors wanted peace, the discrepancy in numbers seldom demanded more than the sacrifice of one victim on their part, once muskets had been introduced the discrepancy became so great that all rules of warfare were abandoned, and wholesale massacres took place.

In this way, during the latter part of the nineteenth century the Small Islanders practically wiped out the whole population of what was once a flourishing district containing innumerable villages immediately inland from the adjacent Malekulan coast. The sites of these villages, including that of the mainland village of Tolamp, are now pointed out in what is thick jungle. Not only were the mainland villages thus decimated, however. The same tragedy occurred even in warfare between two Sides of each individual Small Island. The first villages to acquire muskets were in all cases those situated on the "Superior" Side of each Island, which, being in possession of the best beaches, were the first to come into contact with white men. These muskets they then used against the members of the other Side of their own Island, with the result that the villages on the "Inferior" Side were severely handled. This was the case with the two villages of Emil Marur and Emil Lep on Atchin, both of which were nearly wiped out.

The more far-seeing of the Small Islanders now bitterly regret these suicidal ravages which have so seriously reduced their numbers in face of the growing menace of the whites. But the measure of their regret still depends, however, on the degree of kinship ties between themselves and their victims. For, while muskets are now with common consent banned in warfare against their fellow Small Islanders, they are still used against the few remaining inhabitants of the adjacent mainland. Thus, no native will think of going to his garden on the mainland unless fully armed, and muskets are part of the normal equipment taken on every ceremonial visit to another Small Island, lest during the dance some hostile outbreak occur.[1]

[1] For the degrading influence of the musket on native warfare see also Wedgwood, 1, p. 33, and Harrisson, 2.

2: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1936
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their quarrelsomeness among themselves. This characteristic is undeniable,[1] but was mitigated before the coming of the white man by the fact that, living in dense bush and being but poor shots with bows and arrows, the amount of life sacrificed in the course of their wars was very small. Wars would drag on for months without a death. With the advent of the shot-gun matters however suddenly changed. What had before been little more than semi-ritual quarrels assumed quite different dimensions, and the coastal peoples, who were the first to obtain firearms, slaughtered their enemies without mercy. The old rule that wars could not cease till the number of dead, rarely more than one or two, was equal on both sides (this alone showing its ritual nature) no longer held when these were multiplied by tens, and war then came to mean the extermination of entire villages. In this way the people of Atchin had themselves assisted in the complete extermination of entire mainland communities, so that where before the white man's arrival there were flourishing villages was now waste bush. In this way almost the entire population of the semi-coastal villages of north-east Malekula, as well as large sections of the population of Atchin itself, had been destroyed, so that the numbers even on this island had been reduced from what are said to have totalled something in the neighbourhood of 1000 to, at the time of my visit, 401. This had made the natives of Atchin think, and their constant cry was, contrary to the opinion of most white men, "How can we combine to save ourselves?"

One method they adopted was, after the expulsion of the last trader, to allow no alcohol on the island. Though passionately fond of drink when they could get it, they had seen enough of its effects and had themselves evolved such a strong public opinion on the subject that no drink was allowed on the island, though it is true that rare passing cutters reaped a brief reward from some of the younger men.

In matters concerning their own culture there was an increasing disapproval of sorcery. How far this was due to the influence of the white man it is difficult to say. It is however a fact that on all the small islands sorcerers, or suspected sorcerers, were finding life considerably less easy than formerly, as the number of refugee sorcerers on Atchin alone showed.

More important, more concrete than these however was their determination to rebuild and reinforce the best elements in their own culture through the performance, ever more magnificently, of the *Maki* rite. One man, almost alone of the decimated Atchin village of Emil Marur, who had spent years on white men's plantations and at the end had been tricked of all his earnings, was busy during the whole of my stay carving the ten images needed for the rite and by intensive garden work and the rearing of pigs and the re-learning of the details of ritual from the older men, preparing for its performance in order to rehabilitate his and his kinsmen's spiritual and, through them, material fortunes. This man was Mari, who, in the clash with the government mentioned above, was in danger of being taken to prison in Vila for an imagined offence.

A similar case was that of Mataru on Vao, this time an erstwhile convert,

[1] The element of fear, though considerable, was never so great in the island populations as among the Big Nambas, owing to the comparative safety afforded by the sea and the greater breadth of outlook gained through trade with other islands.

3: Harrisson N-5 (1934-1935) 1936
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chief's daughter has been given up for years, Atchin contradicts his theory in fact. Baker I think underestimates the vanity of the native.

The Atchinese are among the very few peoples friendly to the administration, and they now appeal at once for peaceful settlements to all disputes. In the old days they gave a lot of trouble, but living on a small island they found a warship was more significant to them than to the bushmen. War is no more, abortion uncommon; the older men consciously want the place to grow; and grow it does. Thus it was the Atchinese who drew my attention to the exorbitantly high pig payments demanded as bride price all over the area in recent years; with their support I was able to lower the price by 80 per cent., back to pre-white level, thus enabling young men to marry with only normal difficulty. Similarly these folk like European medicines for introduced diseases, but use their own for the endemic ones. Their pig transactions and graded-society (*Maki*) rites have been modified; some things have been taken away, others added, both from white and black sources. Atchin dances are second only to those of Matanavat; they are kept up with exactitude and enthusiasm; also with new and often spontaneous variations in one type of the *na-leng*, the highest manifestation of Hebridean art and living. Sorcery and poison are no longer tolerated; the Atchinese are bitter against the adjacent island Vao for continuing these practices—bitter, but not disbelieving. Magic is not now important; old legends and stories, in which these people excel, are a part of daily life and juvenile instruction; the same myths collected by Layard and myself in 1914 and 1935 respectively agree perfectly, there has been no deterioration. The old burial rites and beliefs survive unimpaired.

In general the old customs that are savage or anti-social under modern conditions have disappeared, while those with business, religious, health, or play value have survived, even expanded. It is in this Europeanized heathenism, this intelligently primitive and adaptive but obstinate outlook, that the ancient Melanesian culture is most likely and able to survive. On Atchin to-day every village has its great drums, in lovely dancing glades, dolmens, carved human and bird effigies; a little distance away behind a native-style stone wall is a cluster of palm houses kept clean; at one corner perhaps a cement and iron house, the men's lodge, pride of the place. The women have more status, charm, freedom, and gaiety than elsewhere in the area.

I found the Atchinese charming people—and charm is a word I seldom think of applying to a Melanesian. They are thoroughly independent and sophisticated, combining Melanesian business ability with a more Polynesian intelligence and grace to direct it. The planters and missionaries have no good word to say for Atchin, which is an indication. Few tribes have had the good luck and intelligence to use the white man's things for their own advantage, in harmony with their own culture. I believe that what the Hebridean needs most to-day is guidance in this direction associated with simple medical aid. New education, religion and outlet are unnecessary and inadvisable now, and perhaps for some time to come. A few sympathetic men and women, without undue prejudice, could with a little money and many medicines work wonders. Atchin might well serve as a model in cultural adaptation. It